

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSC-05 SS-15 USIA-06 OPR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9682

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 5408

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, ENRG, NI

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS

REFS: STATE 120792, LAGOS 5057 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY. AS INDICATED LAGOS 5057, EMBASSY WELCOMES PROPOSED VISIT OF WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS. IT IS HOWEVER ONLY FAIR TO CAUTION VISIT ORGANIZERS THAT VERY LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGE CAN BE EXPECTED WITH FMG OR NNOC CONCERNING NIGERIA'S ROLE AS LEADING ENERGY PRODUCER. END SUMMARY.

2. IN CONTRAST TO OTHER OPEC COUNTRIES WHERE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS IS INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED, NIGERIAN OIL OFFICIALS GENERALLY SHUN PUBLIC EXPOSURE. ALL BUT THE TOP OFFICIAL OR TWO WOULD LACK THE AUTHORITY OR SELF-CONFIDENCE TO FACE A FOREIGN GROUP-- ESPECIALLY AN AMERICAN GROUP WHICH WILL WANT TO ASK PROBING QUESTIONS. EMBASSY WILL DO ITS BEST TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING, BUT SUCCESS WILL DEPEND ON REACTION OF MINES AND POWER PERMSEC ASIODU, AND IT CANNOT BE ASSUMED THAT HE WILL AGREE. RELEVANT MINISTRY ALSO UNDERGOING REORGANIZATION.

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3. MEETING WITH HEADS OF U.S. OIL COMPANIES WOULD CERTAINLY BE POSSIBLE; WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS (AND THE COMPANY HEADS) PROFITED FROM SIMILAR ENCOUNTER IN 1974, ALTHOUGH LOCAL COMPANY HEADS WERE UNPREPARED OR RELUCTANT TO ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO BROADER ISSUES SUCH AS OIL PRICES, CORPORATE POLICIES, THE FUTURE OF OPEC, AND THE ENVIRONMENT. HEADS OF THE TWO LARGEST U.S. COMPANIES WILL UNFORTUNATELY BE ON VACATION AT TIME OF PROPOSED VISIT.

4. COMMENT. THUS, WHILE WE WARMLY WELCOME WHF VISIT AND WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE IT A SUCCESS, WE ARE OBLIGED TO SOUND THE WARNING THAT ONLY LIMITED PARTICIPATION CAN BE EXPECTED FROM NIGERIAN SIDE CONCERNING GROUP'S AREA OF PRIMARY INTEREST - ENERGY.

EASUM

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